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Message Text

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ACTION PRS-01

INFO OCT-01 AF-10 ISO-00 USIE-00 SS-20 SSO-00 RSC-01 DRC-01

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---------- 116891
O 120932Z SEP 74
FM AMEMBASSY ADDIS ABABA
TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 0981

UNCLAS ADDIS ABABA 10851

E.O. 11652: N/A
TAGS: PINS PINT ET
SUBJECT: ETHIOPIAN EMPEROR DEPOSED

POOL FILE; DEPT PASS UNITED PRESS INTL., ASSOCIATED PRESS,
TIME, NEWSWEEK, AMERICAN BROADCASTING CO., AND NATIONAL
BROADCASTING CO.

EMPEROR HAILE SELASSIE THE FIRST HAS BEEN DEPOSED. THE ANNOUNCE-
MENT IN THE NAME OF THE ARMED FORCES COORDINATING COMMITTEE ENDED
THE EIGHTY-TWO (82) YEAR OLD MONARCH'S FIFTY-EIGHT (58) YEARS OF
RULE, FIRST AS REGENT TO EMPRESS ZEWDITU RPT ZEWDITU AND THEN AS
THE CONQUERING LION OF THE TRIBE OF JUDAH, ELECT OF GOD AND
EMPEROR OF ETHIOPIA. THE ANNOUNCEMENT SAID THERE HAD BEEN A FULL
MILITARY TAKEOVER AND SAID PARLIAMENT AND THE CONSTITUTION HAD
BEEN SUSPENDED AND THAT A MILITARY COURT WOULD BE ESTABLISHED TO
TRY AS YET UNNAMED PERSONS WITHOUT THE RIGHT OF APPEAL. IT IS
NOT YET CLEAR WHETHER THIS APPLIES DIRECTLY TO THE NEARLY TWO
HUNDRED (200) HIGH-RANKING CIVILIAN AND MILITARY OFFICIALS
CURRENTLY BEING HELD IN THE ARMED FORCES FOURTH DIVISION HEAD-
QUARTERS HERE IN THE CAPITAL AWAITING TRIAL ON CHARGES OF CORRUP-
TION, GRAFT AND MALPRACTICE IN OFFICE. THE COMMITTEE STATEMENT
SAID THE EMPEROR WOULD BE REPLACED ON THE THRONE BY HIS ONLY
SURVIVING SON, CROWN PRINCE ASFA WOSSEN, WHO IS STILL IN GENEVA
RECOVERING FROM A DEBILITATING STROKE WHICH HAS LEFT HIM PARTIALLY
PARALYZED. BUT THE COMMITTEE MADE IT CLEAR THAT HE WOULD HAVE NO
REAL POWER OR AUTHORITY AND WOULD BE CROWNED AS KING AND NOT RPT
NOT AS EMPEROR.
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THE COMMITTEE SAID IT WOULD NOT TOLERATE ANY STRIKES OR DEMON-

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STRATIONS AGAINST THE ETHIOPIA FIRST MOVEMENT BUT DID NOT RULE OUT OTHER SUCH DEMONSTRATIONS FOR DIFFERENT REASONS. IT SAID THERE WOULD BE FULLY MILITARY RULE UNTIL A NEW CONSTITUTION IS APPROVED AND ANNOUNCED THAT ALL INTERNATIONAL FLIGHTS HAD BEEN CANCELLED UNTIL FURTHER NOTICE AND ALSO CLAMPED A 7:30 PM (1630 GMT) TO 5:00 AM (0200 GMT) CURFEW ON THE ENTIRE COUNTRY ALSO UNTIL FURTHER NOTICE.

THE ARMED FORCES COMMITTEE SAID IT HAD BEEN FORCED INTO ITS ACTION BECAUSE THE EMPEROR HAD REFUSED TO HAND BACK THE BILLIONS RPT BILLIONS OF DOLLARS HE HAD INVESTED OVERSEAS AND BECAUSE OF THE CRIMES HE HAD COMMITTED AGAINST THE ETHIOPIAN NATION AND PEOPLE OVER THE PAST FIFTY (50) YEARS. IT ALSO ACCUSED THE EMPEROR OF FAILING TO FULFILL HIS RESPONSIBILITIES AS SUPREME LEADER AND ACCUSED FORMER GOVERNMENTS OF MANIPULATING THE LAWS TO BENEFIT ONLY THE ROYAL FAMILY AND THE RULING CLASSES IN GENERAL. AND THE COMMITTEE SAID BECAUSE OF THIS ETHIOPIA WAS INDIRE ECONOMIC TROUBLES AT THE MOMENT.

THE COMMITTEE ALSO ACCUSED PARLIAMENT OF NEGLECTING THE CRUCIAL QUESTION OF LAND REFORM AND SAID ALL RESOLUTIONS PASSED BY PARLIAMENT WERE AIMED AT BENEFITING THE RULING CLASS. IT ALSO ACCUSED PARLIAMENT OF HAVING BEEN ELECTED UNDEMOCRATICALLY.

THE DRAMATIC ANNOUNCEMENT WAS BROADCAST OVER THE GOVERNMENT-OWNED RADIO ETHIOPIA AND WAS PRECEDED AND FOLLOWED BY MARTIAL MUSIC WHICH IS STILL BEING PLAYED INTERSPERSED WITH REPEATS OF THE ORIGINAL DEPOSITION ANNOUNCEMENT AND THE PLAYING OF THE ETHIOPIA FIRST SONG.

IT IS RELIABLY REPORTED THAT EMPEROR HAILE SELASSIE IS NOW INVOLVED IN SOME FORM OF CEREMONY AT HIS RECENTLY NATIONALIZED PALACE WHICH IS ALSO BEING ATTENDED BY THE NEW POWER IN THE COUNTRY, THE ARMED FORCES COMMITTEE. HOWEVER, THE WHEREABOUTS OR FATE OF THE CIVILIAN CABINET OF PRIME MINISTER MIKAEL IMRU IS STILL NOT KNOWN.

TANKS, ARMORED CARS AND TROOPS HAVE APPEARED AT STRATEGIC POINTS IN THE CAPITAL, EXPECIALLY AROUND THE CITY'S MANY BANKS. BUT OTHERWISE LIFE IN THE CITY IS CONTINUING NORMALLY. MOST SHOPS ARE OPEN FOR BUSINESS, AND THE ONLY OUTWARD SIGN OF THE ETHIOPIA WITH-OUT THE RULE OF THE EMPEROR IS SMALL CROWDS OF PEOPLE WATCHING THE DISPLAY OF MILITARY STRENGTH AND THOSE CLUSTERED AROUND RADIO SETS LISTENING FOR FURTHER DEVELOPMENTS. BUT NOW THE PEOPLE HAVE BEEN TOLD TO GO TO WORK AND CLEAR OFF THE STREETS, AND WERE BEING UNCLASSIFIED

THANKED FOR THEIR COOPERATION WITH THE ARMED FORCES MOVEMENT.

ETHIOPIA CONTINUES TO BE CUT OFF FROM THE REST OF THE WORLD AFTER ALL INTERNATIONAL TELEPHONE, TELEX AND CABLE SERVICES WERE ABRUPTLY CUT LAST NIGHT AROUND 7:30 PM (1630 GMT) FOLLOWING NEWS OF THE ARREST OF THE EMPEROR'S ONLY SURVIVING DAUGHTER, PRINCESS TENAGNE WORQ. THE CITY IS REMARKABLY CALM GIVEN THE MOMENTOUS TURN OF EVENTS, PROVING THAT THE RECENT CONCERTED PRESS REVELA-TIONS AGAINST THE EMPEROR HAVE SOFTENED UP THE RESIDENTS OF

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ADDIS ABABA FOR THIS EVENTUALITY. BUT THE MAIN QUESTION MARK IS HOW THE COUNTRY'S ESTIMATED TWENTY-EIGHT (28) MILLION RURAL DWELLERS WILL TAKE THE NEWS THAT THERE NOS IS AN ETHIOPIA WITH-OUT THE RULE OFHEMPEROR HAILE SELASSIE.
THE DEPOSITION ANNOUNCEMENT HAS BEEN READ TO THE EMPEROR BY THE COMMITTEE, WHO WENT TO THE NATIONAL PALACE FOR WHAT WAS DESCRIBED AS A "BRIEF CEREMONY." AND IT HAS BEEN RELIABLY REPORTED THAT THE EMPEROR HAS BEEN TAKEN AWAY TO THE FOURTH DIVISION.
WYMAN

NOTE BY OC/T: NOT PASSED ABOVE ADDRESSEES.

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: GOVERNMENT OVERTHROW, MILITARY GOVERNMENT, POLITICAL SITUATION
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 12 SEP 1974
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: n/a
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: n/a
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment:
Disposition Date: 01 JAN 1960
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1974ADDIS10851
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: N/A
Errors: N/A
Film Number: D740254-0797
From: ADDIS ABABA
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1974/newtext/t19740953/aaaabtaq.tel
Line Count: 126
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Office: ACTION PRS
Original Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 3
Previous Channel Indicators:
Previous Classification: n/a
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: n/a
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: WorrelSW
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 18 JUL 2002
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <18 JUL 2002 by maustmc>; APPROVED <31 JAN 2003 by WorrelSW>
Review Markings:

Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
30 JUN 2005

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: ETHIOPIAN EMPEROR DEPOSED POOL FILE; DEPT PASS UNITED PRESS INTL., ASSOCIATED PRESS
TAGS: PINS, PINT, ET
To: STATE
Type: TE
Markings: Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 30 JUN 2005

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